

Moreland, H. R. 2019. Information source and channel preference in marine policy development: A case study of the Nova Scotian Eastern Shore Islands Area of Interest consultation process. [graduate project]. Halifax, NS: Dalhousie University.

Abstract

The ways in which environmental information is communicated and by whom are important factors in decision-making processes. The sources and channels that people receive environmental information from have the potential to change their attitude and decisions about an issue and should, therefore, be considered carefully. Understanding why people choose particular sources and channels for receiving such information may help to facilitate productive working relationships among diverse knowledge groups and foster communication among them. This project examined information-related activities of stakeholders during a consultation process for a Marine Protected Area (MPA) on the eastern shore of Nova Scotia, Canada. This study included a literature review and interviews of ten individuals from five unique stakeholder groups to determine their patterns of information use during this process, and the role that information played during a federal consultation procedure. The results of this study show that the human dimension is an essential factor to consider in MPA planning. More specifically, source of information and channel use, information uptake, and information use depend on a variety of personal and societal factors, including historical context, interpersonal relationships, and source trust. Consideration of these factors in resource management and planning could facilitate better working relationships between managers and stakeholders, especially when communicating about a dynamic and possibly contentious topic such as marine conservation.

